

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423

March 13, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER

Township Supervisor Linda Howell called the regular monthly Board of Trustees meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the township hall. Zoom option available for the public.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Amber Davis, Jim Delaney (Zoom, not voting), Patrick Dietrich,
Linda Howell, Jim Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Doug DenBleyker – Graafschap Fire Department chief
Al Meshkin – Township manager
Michelle Sall – Community development director
Jim Hayden – Public information coordinator
Amy Scholten, Charlene Fields, Zoey Hallam, Jenifer French (Zoom),
Brett Grams, Christina Foraker, Heather Jahr

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Dietrich, to approve the minutes of Feb. 14, 2024, as presented. Howell called for a vote on the motion. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED 4-0 BY VOICE VOTE

3. FINANCIAL REPORT/REVIEW & APPROVE BILLS

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Davis, to approve the February bills as submitted. Howell called for a vote on the motion. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED 4-0 VOICE VOTE

4. REPORT OF OFFICERS

- a. State Senator Roger Victory (Late. See below)
- b. State Representative Nancy DeBoer: Written report submitted.
- c. Judge Marge Bakker – Allegan County Legal Assistance
Bakker addressed the Allegan County Legal Assistance Center
- d. County Commissioner Jim Storey: Not present. No report.
Allegan County Sheriff Frank Baker addressed the board.
- e. Herrick Library Representative Gary Dewey. Written report submitted.
- f. Holland Aquatic Center Representative Colleen Hill. Written report submitted.
- g. Planning Commission Chair Marcia Perry. Not present. No report.
Johnson updated the board on last week's meeting.

- h. Zoning Board of Appeals Chair Casey Kimes. Not present. No report.
- i. Parks Commission Chair Brad Laninga. Present. Written report submitted.
- j. Graafschap Fire Chief Doug DenBleyker: Present. Written report submitted.
February calls: Total calls: 75. Fillmore – 3 fire calls, 19 medical/rescue calls; Laketown – 11 fire calls, 35 medical/rescue calls. Assists to other departments – 4 fire calls, 2 to Saugatuck, 1 to Holland, 1 to Park; 2 medical/rescue calls, 2 to Holland, 1 to Allegan County Sheriff's Department with drone; Assists from others – 1 from Holland, 1 from Saugatuck.
Fire on Tuesday at Spring Brook Apartments, 1074 32nd St.: Building assessed value -- \$862,700, Building estimated damage -- \$15,000, Response time with a manned station – 4.30 minutes, Cause – Careless disregarded smoking materials.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE ON OLD AND NEW BUSINESS AGENDA ITEMS

Start: 6:24 p.m.

Four people spoke.

Topics: Huyser House, budget, recreational fires.

End: 6:32 p.m.

State Senator Roger Victory: Update on issues. Howell asked about short-term rentals and state legislature Freedom of Information Act.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- a. FY 2023-24 Budget Amendment

The board discussed budget amendments.

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Dietrich, to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget amendments as presented. Howell called for a vote on the motion. ROLL CALL VOTE. YES – DAVIS, DIETRICH, HOWELL, JOHNSON. NO – NONE. MOTION PASSED 4-0.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. FY 2024-25 Budget Hearing

Howell introduced the proposed 2024-25 budget, noting the increase in election costs, wages and the decision to have groups requesting contracted services come before the board for approval. She said a request for proposal will be developed for a wage study. She introduced staff members and thanked them.

Howell opened the public hearing at 6:46 p.m.

George DeWitt, 6716 Vandermeulen Road: Asked about the Open Burning Ordinance Amendment, saying concerns are minimal from recreational fires. He also said he doesn't understand why the Huyser House needs to be torn down.

Stacey LeFevre, no address given: Said she has created an alternate budget with a 50 percent cut in the township millage rate, that she is concerned about the liquidity of the township with less than 8 months of fund balance planned.

Thomas Drnek, 3964 65th St.: Said he wants to keep spending down and that costs will go up.

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Davis, to close the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget Hearing at 6:54 p.m. Howell called for a vote on the motion. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED 4-0 VOICE VOTE

The board discussed the proposed budget. Johnson said the budget needs to be adopted tonight or the township will shut down April 1, that he doesn't like everything in it but it can work. He said he is concerned the township is spending all its money, and that the township should have two months of general operation funds with a 16.67 percent fund balance. He suggested staff pay increases should be 3 percent not 5 percent, but the difference is about \$11,000 that can be made up from contracted services. He said he does not agree with the CPI used by Meshkin to determine the raises.

Meshkin said there is a fund balance of 66 percent. He explained his choice of CPI. He noted that his final payment of \$162,000 will not be in the next budget.

Delaney asked about a "rainy day" fund. Meshkin said the fund balance is that. Delaney asked about American Rescue Plan Act funds and contracted services. Meshkin explained how the ARPA money has been allocated and spent. He explained contracted services.

A motion was made by Dietrich, seconded by Davis, to approve the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget as presented. Howell called for a vote on the motion. ROLL CALL VOTE. YES – DAVIS, DIETRICH, HOWELL, JOHNSON. NO – NONE. MOTION PASSED 4-0.

Howell explained why Delaney was not voting due to state rules about Zoom.

b. Board of Review Compensation

Meshkin explained the proposal to increase the pay for the board of review from \$20 an hour to \$30 an hour which will mean about an extra \$1,000 per year. The funding is included in the budget.

A motion was made by Davis, seconded by Johnson, to approve the pay increase for the board of review as presented. Howell called for a vote on the motion. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED 4-0 VOICE VOTE.

c. Huyser House Demolition Bids

The board discussed bids to demolish the Huyser House with a recommendation from the parks and recreation commission to accept the \$29,845 bid from Specialize Demolition Inc., 3793 136th Ave., Hamilton.

Meshkin said the Specialized bid included all of the necessary specifications. Meshkin also stated he was strongly opposed to the demolition of the Huyser house, but he doesn't get to vote.

A motion was made by Dietrich, seconded by Johnson, to accept the bid request from Specialized Demolition Inc. as presented and authorize the execution of the contract. Howell called for a vote on the motion. MOTION APPROVED 3-1 VOICE VOTE. YES – DIETRICH, HOWELL, JOHNSON. NO – DAVIS.

8. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Start: 7:22 p.m.

Seven people spoke.

Topics: Fellinlove Farm, ARPA funds, circuit court judge election, citizen comment procedure, FOIA, new manager, budget, tree trimming, contracted services, Huyser House

End: 7:38 p.m.

Dietrich said the township needs to check with its attorney on the proposed burn ordinance.

Meshkin explained the difference between a public hearing and citizen comments; that the township has no say on Consumers Power tree trimming and cutting.

9. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Johnson, seconded by Davis, to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m. Howell called for a vote on the motion. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED 4-0 VOICE VOTE.